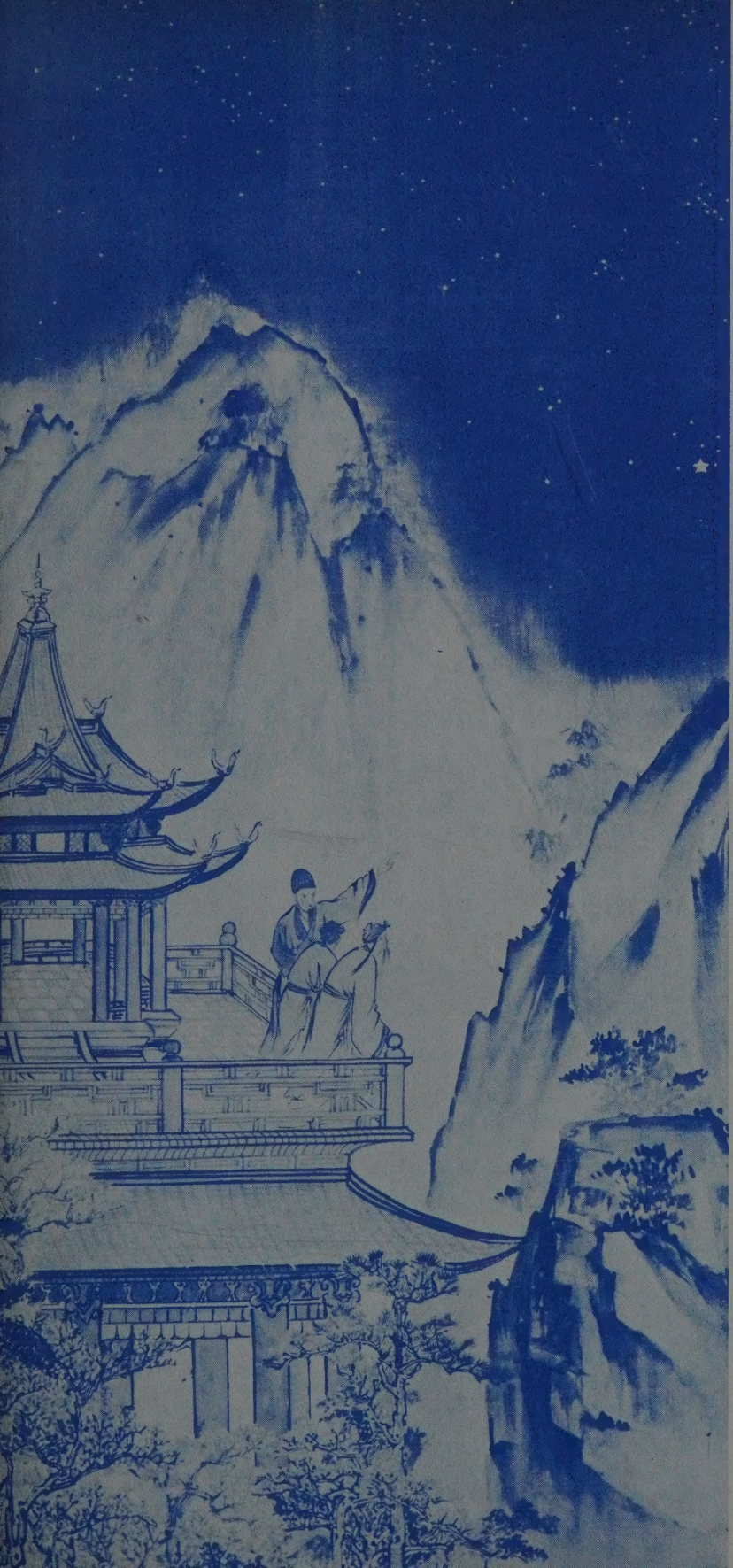

Lutheran Herald

DECEMBER 25, 1956

PACIFIC LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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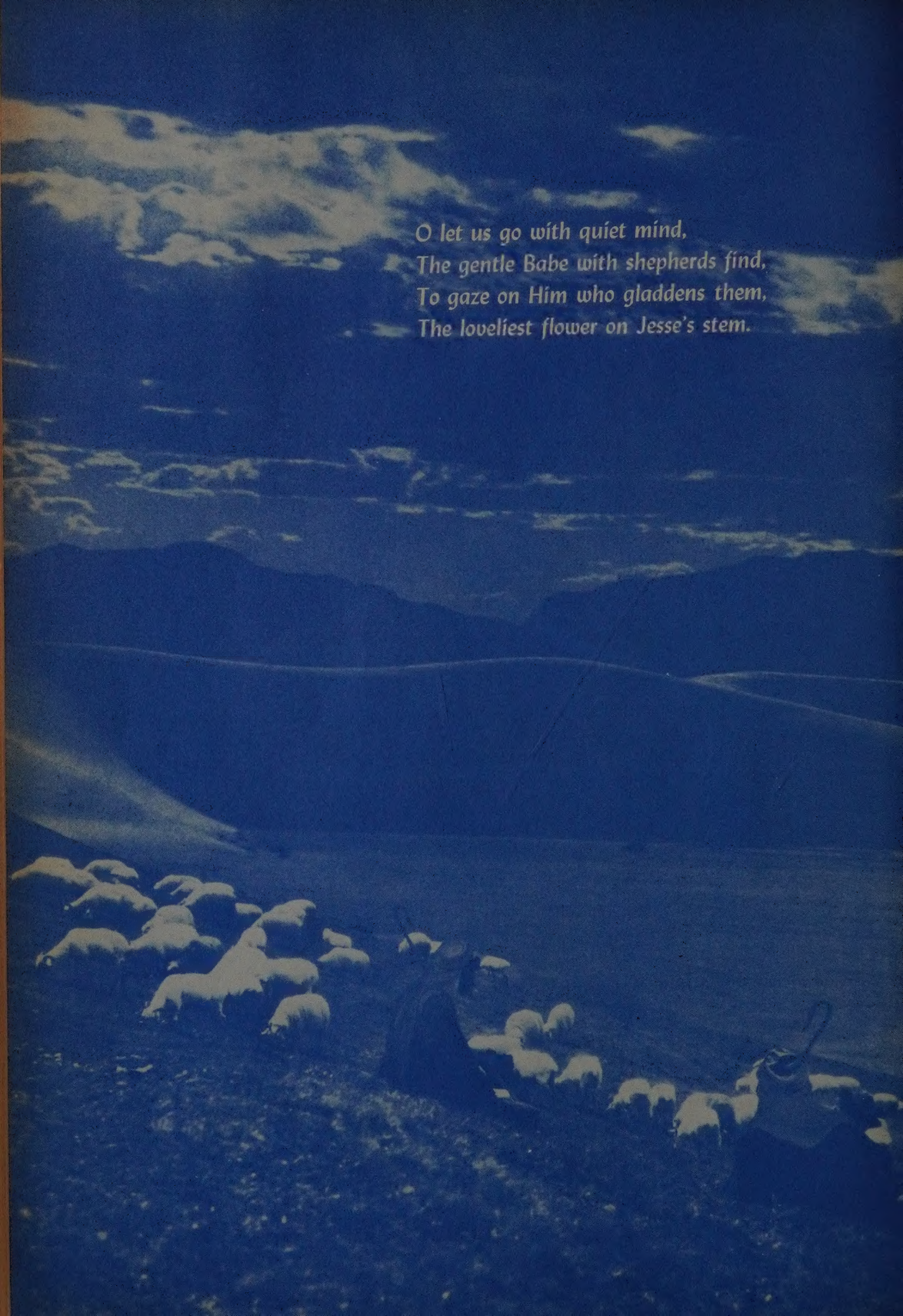
we have seen his star . . .


O let us go with quiet mind,
The gentle Babe with shepherds find,
To gaze on Him who gladdens them,
The loveliest flower on Jesse's stem.

n ordinary beast of burden becomes the vehicle
which transports the holiest burden of all.
stable becomes the Church of the Incarnation,
a manger the altar. . . .

THE ORDINARY BECOMES DIVINE

A Christmas Meditation by the Editor

VE GLAMORIZE Christmas. I wonder if "glamorize" is exactly the right word; somehow, it ries shades of meaning which are not entirely praiserthy: tawdry, even cheap. It is true that people do often make of the observance of Christmas someng tawdry and cheap. There is far too much comrcialization, for example. Sometimes the street decoons are too bright, too glittery.

But glamor may mean beauty, too; it may mean alization. It may mean that we make something raordinary of something which in itself is ordinary. s in that sense that I am using the word here. The er day I listened to and watched on television a dition of Handel's *Messiah*. That is the kind of amor" we are thinking about here. The warm glory the music, lifting the age-old words of the Scripture new heights; the earnestness of the director; the contration of the members of the orchestra; the fervor the thousand and more singers; the rapt attention of ne eleven thousand listeners—all this combined to lift ughts of Christmas to the very throne of God. That vhat we mean by the true glamor of Christmas.

it is with every incident, every thing, every person t Christmas touches. The truth is that it was all, before it became a part of Christmas, quite ordinary. Think of the various parts of the Christmas Story. In itself each one is ordinary. There is a young couple wending a weary way to Bethlehem, a journey of compulsion, not of choice. Bone-tired, without a doubt; no different in that respect from the family of 1956 fleeing from Hungary in search of refuge. As we remember the journey of Mary and Joseph, and try to see it through their eyes, it is not the glamorous, not the beautiful, we see; it is the ordinary life of ordinary people.

That stable with its fabled manger; was there anything glamorous about that? Not if it was like the barns we knew in our youth. About all that could be said for them was that they were warm; but they were not intended for human habitation. Mary and Joseph accepted thankfully what shelter they could get, but not even their love for one another and their calm faith in God could make it a glamorous dwelling.

Then there was the shepherd scene. Anything glamorous there? Not unless sheep and sheepherders were a good deal different then than they are in 1956! Have you seen the sheep wagon of the western plains? Or flocks of hundreds of sheep? It would take more imagination than most of us have to find anything glamorous there. And I suspect that that was the case when "there

ut the cover:

ne portrayal of the Wisemen on the er is by Johnny Shek, a Chinese student t. Olaf College. It is taken from a book tled "Sketches of Christ from a Chinese h," published by Augsburg Publishing se.

Lutheran Herald O. G. Malmin, Editor • Wm. H. Gentz, Assoc. Ed.
Carmen Mitchell, *Managing Editor* • Melva Rorem, *Assistant Editor*
Official organ of The Evangelical Lutheran Church. Published weekly by Augsburg Publishing House, 426 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis 15, Minnesota, Randolph E. Haugan, General Manager; Albert E. Anderson, Circulation Manager. Subscription price, United States and Canada, per year $2.75. Entered as second class matter January 14, 1931, at the post office at Minneapolis, Minnesota, under the act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the United States of America by Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis 15, Minnesota.
December 25, 1956 • Volume XL • Number 52

were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." Not glamor but ordinary-ness.

So? So, first, of all, let's try to get the ordinary things of Luke 2 down to our own time, our own surroundings, our own circumstances. Let's get ourselves into the story. A young couple—the young woman not in any condition to travel—on a necessary and difficult journey; a beat-up second-hand car their means of travel. A fancy hotel in a great city, and the hotel filled with prosperous convention delegates, most of them with "confirmed reservations" for room-with-bath. (Incidentally, I wonder what a desk clerk in a luxury hotel of today would have said to Joseph and Mary.) At any rate, no rooms available. A place to stay, nevertheless, because people are kind now as they were then. Not a stable, for there are none in the cities of today. Perhaps a service station, with the back-room cot on which the night attendant rests when he can? Perhaps a vacant corner in a warehouse? It makes no difference where or what; just try to put it in the frame of today's ordinary-ness.

Shepherds and sheep? Well, perhaps, if you happen to live in sheep country. But not necessarily. For our present purpose, we may even take liberties with Luke. There are alternate possibilities instead of "And there were shepherds. . . ." Why not read one of these: "And there was a farmer plowing his fields with a tractor. . . ." "And there was a housewife busy in her kitchen. . . ." "And there was a business man totalling up the day's receipts. . . ." "And there was a laboring man working at his bench. . . ." "And there was a pastor slaving and praying over next Sunday's sermon. . . ." Anything and everything from the ordinary-ness of life belongs here, anything that brings you and me and our everyday lives into the story that Luke tells.

Where does the glamor, the beauty, then come from? How does the ordinary become divine? Because God steps into the situation. An ordinary young woman becomes the mother of the Son of God, and an ordinary man becomes His foster-father. An ordinary beast of burden becomes the vehicle which transports the holiest burden of all—the Savior of the world. A stable becomes the Church of the Incarnation, a manger the altar. The fields outside the city become the place of the first Christmas service, shepherds become the first Christian congregation. When God intervenes, the ordinary becomes divine.

His coming could have been different. Almighty God, dwelling in glory, could have sent His Son into the world in glory. The palace of the Emperor of Rome, the Holy of Holies in the temple at Jerusalem—all were under His dominion and could have been the birth place of His Son. But He chose the ordinary and ma it divine.

And that is why all men can find themselves in story of Jesus. Most of us are ordinary and we understand the ordinary. Would the shepherds h felt free to go to a palace or temple to see what angel had spoken to them about? Doubtful. But t did dare to go to the stable, because it was a part their ordinary lives. Would we feel at home with Christ Child surrounded by the trappings of wealth a earthly splendor? But the Christ whose message co to the farm and the kitchen and the desk and the w bench—Him we can understand, because He is a p of the surroundings of our ordinary lives.

So the ordinary becomes beautiful, divine. We n a Savior, and here is One who makes Himself a part our daily lives, One "who became poor that He mi make many rich." We need to know God, and Je taught us to call God "Father." The first lesson Christmas is the one the shepherds learned and ac upon: "Let us now go even to Bethlehem and see t thing which has happened, which the Lord hath m known to us." "And they came with haste." The Chr mas journey each year, whether we have known H for a lifetime, or whether it is our first journey, is the side of Him who "came into the world to s sinners, of whom I am chief," as the Apostle Paul s

The second lesson is that what we have seen is great, so wonderful, that we cannot contain it; we m share it, communicate it. The shepherds who, Lu says, "Returned with joy, glorifying and praising G for all they had heard and seen," were the first witne to the world of God's great love revealed in Christ.

And the third lesson is that God continues to t an active part in the lives of His own. What He ta part in, He makes divine. Be your life as ordinary it can be—filled with drudgery, acquainted with sor and grief, or flecked with the joys of the ordinary- became divine the moment God intervened it. We the sons and daughters of God, and for us the ordin has become divine.

Whatever the circumstances of Christmas, 1956, us it is the unchanging Christmas of always. An settled world, uneasy and afraid; people in want, of in despair; "man's inhumanity to man" more appar than ever—what difference, actually, does it make? cause "there is born to you this day, in the city of Da a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

So we leave the farm and the town and the vill and the city. We drop the tasks of the ordinary. journey to the manger. And there, as we see G great Gift and acknowledge His love, we know t God has entered our lives.

For us the ordinary has become divine.

I, Too, Have Gifts

Throughout the centuries no child has had
Gifts as beautiful as those that came
Across far desert sands to make Christ glad:
The fragrance of frankincense, and the flame
Of glittering gold, were gifts that were unpriced,
Even the myrrh whose scent was bitter-sweet
Was a gracious offering to the baby Christ
Born in a darkened town on a lowly street.

I, too, have gifts of value I would bring
To the blessed One on this clear starlit night:
I have a song of praise that I shall sing,
I have a heart that holds a lifted light
Which I am sure he will be mindful of—
It burns for him. I, too, have gems quite rare:
They are my adoration and my love,
For him to reach glad hands and find them there.

GRACE NOLL CROWELL

The Tryst Is Ended

For one brief holiday we share
An interval of peace
And taste the joy which Heaven gives
To hearts that seek release
From man-made tensions, hate, and fear.
But man is lured away
By life's distractions—and the tryst
Is ended in a day.

GERTRUDE HANSON

The Little Red

SMUGLY, Melvin surveyed the pile of gifts under the school Christmas tree. Both the little red fire engine and the box of paints he wanted waited there for him. Four-year-old Mabel had seen Mama wrapping these gifts for him, and quickly reported the glad tidings.

Pete, the other second grader sitting beside him, wanted a little red fire engine more than anything. They had looked in the catalog, and always Pete had wished most for the fire engine.

"Pa took off day before yesterday," Pete whispered now. "Ain't got back yet. Maybe won't till after Christmas. So Ma didn't have nothing to bring along to the Tree."

Pete's Pa and Ma were mean to each other. Sometimes, because Pete begged him, Melvin would come to play with him. And the way Pete's Pa and Ma were to each other made Melvin think of the snakes that slithered about, with menacing tongues, in and out of the stone pile down by the slough. It was always extra good to come home again and hear Papa and Mama talking together in the kitchen.

"Melvin Olson! Present for Melvin Olson!" It Ella, one of the two eighth grade girls distributing presents.

Melvin eagerly grasped the flat package. The w colors! During Christmas vacation, now, he wo learn to paint sunsets that didn't look like fried e He would bring his nicest sunset back to school Teacher to see.

He tore the paper off the metal box, opened the Sixteen little pans of paint. The best he had dared h for was eight! He turned quickly around in the c to smile his thanks to Papa and Mama who were wa ing him gladly.

Now for the little red fire engine!

Pete sat silent beside him. He seemed to shrink b against the desk like his Ma back there, hunched aga a wall. And all around were fathers and mothers boys and girls merry over presents that Ella and Berg the eighth grade girls, were bringing them from un the tree.

A Story

by

Erling Nicolai Rolfsrud

Fire Engine

The pile was almost gone. There was no gift for ete there under the tree. His Ma had brought nothing. is Pa hadn't even come. A big hurt for Pete ached Melvin's heart.

Then he spied a package in Bergliot's armload. It d the same kind of wrapping paper that had covered e box of paints. It was just the right size to be his e engine from Papa and Mama.

Melvin popped from his seat. He reached Bergliot's de before she could call out his name. "Please," he hispered to her as he touched the fire engine package, That's for me, isn't it?"

Bergliot nodded.

"Get Teacher to change it. So's it'll be for Pete. ease!"

Bergliot looked at him in astonishment. But she took e package to Teacher. Teached turned toward him, question in her eyes. Melvin nodded hastily. Then eacher smiled and hurried behind the bed sheet curns strung across the front corner of the schoolroom. Melvin felt his hands moisten with excitement as he waited for Teacher to reappear. When she did, Bergliot quickly called out, "Present for Pete Halvorson!"

Pete swallowed hard. Bergliot set the package on the desk in front of him. He stared unbelievingly at the tag with his name on it. Somehow, Melvin saw, Teacher had managed to find a new tag on which to write Pete's name.

With trembling fingers, and squealing with delight, Pete unwrapped the little red fire engine.

It was ever so much nicer than the one they had yearned over together in the Sears, Roebuck catalog! This one had a tiny bell that really tinkled. It had wheels with real rubber tires.

But it was Pete's fire engine to take home now!

The stars shone bright in the prairie sky when Melvin slung himself over the sides of the bob sled and snuggled into the deep straw beside Mama and Mabel. Mama pulled him tight beside her as Papa tucked the red and green pieced quilt and the old buffalo robe around the three of them.

"You see what Melvin did for Pete tonight, Papa?" Mama's voice was sweet and tender in the cold, crisp air.

"Ya," said Papa. "I know what our boy did for Pete."

His voice was big and strong. Papa was something like the oak door on the house at home, big and strong to shut out the cold and the wind and always keeping safe inside all that was warm and good.

Papa was still in the barn taking care of the horses when Melvin undressed beside the glowing heater in the living room. Then, in his long flannel nightgown, Melvin sped up the cold stairs and shivered into his bed.

His chilled feet sought the hot flat iron Mama had wrapped in newspapers and tucked into the bed for him. Then, his feet warmed, he pulled the flat iron higher in the bed, curled himself around it. As he warmed, he lay savoring the sound of Papa's voice when he said, "Ya. I know what our boy did for Pete."

Melvin thought of Pete and the little red fire engine that a fellow sure needed in a house where there wasn't a voice that was always good like Papa's, always tender like Mama's. Then, hugging the little red fire engine of his family's love to his heart, Melvin fell into sweet sleep.

How blessed are the little ones who can sleep, like Melvin did, secure in a home where peace and good will abide. No ribbon-wrapped gift we can place under the Christmas tree for our children can ever hold as much for them—now and after we are gone—as the sure knowledge that they are enfolded in Mom and Dad's love. In no home can this love be as strong and sweet as that where first the Christ Child-Savior is cradled in each heart.

the festival of power and life

F. Townley Lord

WHATEVER else Christmas may have done, it has set the Church to singing. It supplies the three factors which Bernard Manning found in the great hymns of Charles Wesley: "the solid structure of historic dogma, the passionate thrill of present experience, the glory of a mystic sunlight coming directly from another world."

I doubt if there is any Christmas hymn more widely known than that of Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady, "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night." It has been described as a word-picture of great beauty. Nahum Tate was once a poet-laureate; he died in a debtors' prison. Nicholas Brady was once a royal chaplain; he ended his days in poverty. Yet these two, bequeathing nothing else, left us a legacy which, coming into royal home and humble cottage, has spread its warm glow across 256 winters.

There is no doubt about the glow. Let the icy blasts do what they will, yet as soon as the Christmas festival comes round there steals across the heart a gentle breeze as of summer. Wrote Sir Walter Scott:

The wind is chill
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.

Stony hearts are softened. The selfish people of thi world warm to unwonted generosity. We feel, as at n other season, that it is more blessed to give than t receive.

This is the season of infectious friendliness that gather all mankind within the circle of brotherhood. Listenin once again to the bells of Bethlehem, we feel within u a stirring of power like that of which Sir Winsto Churchill has lately written in his eulogy of Alfred th Great: "A power to rise above the whole force of ci cumstances, to remain unbiased by the extremes victory or defeat, to persevere in the teeth of disaste to greet returning fortune with a cool eye, to have fait in men after repeated betrayals."

This Is the Miracle

This is the yearly miracle repeated amid the winte snows. We may well ask why the Christmas messag has such power. Why, asked an editorial writer in *Th London Times,* does Christmas survive the shocks time and circumstances, and pass unscathed throug changes that uproot so much that is familiar in th heritage of the past? Let another famous journal suppl the answer. Commenting on the words from Matthe "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise," th late H. Wilson Harris, writing editorially in *The Spe tator,* gave his view that the essential fact is the birth Christ, not that the birth of Christ was on this wise that wise. We may marvel at the angels' song, the she herds' awe and wonder, the incomparable poetry of th Magnificat, the tender picture of Mary, of whom Che terton wrote:

The Christ-Child stood on Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him
And all the stars looked down.

But deeper than the romantic, pictorial setting of t great event is the fact itself. Once, long ago, Jesus w born. For a long time now we have nourished o strongest hopes on that fact.

Even the unorthodox can pay tribute to this. H. Wells concluded his *Short History of the World* with chronological table. He gave us a list of dates, beginni with far-famed Egypt, Rome, Assyria, Persia; he recall the stalwarts of the ancient days, Cyrus, Philip of Ma don, Pompey, Caesar Augustus. Then came anoth date—"Birth of Jesus of Nazareth: Christian Era gins." Wells preferred, as he said, to keep history a theology apart. But you cannot keep history apart fr

ıything—politics, economics, culture, literature, re-gion. How impossible it is to keep the Christmas ıte in the calendar apart from theology!

Christmas is thus inseparable from God. Dwell, if ou like, on Mary, as the world's artists have done, de-cting in Italian, Flemish, German, Spanish genius e mother holding her Child before the world; or on e shepherds whom Milton described as "simply chat-ng in a rustic row"; or on the wise men bringing their old, frankincense, and myrrh, their bejewelled robes colorful contrast to the dull tones of the manger. well on all these—yet your attention is inevitably awn to the central figure; in gratitude you learn that e rude manger contains God's greatest gift to the orld, Himself.

ıe Glad Meaning of Faith

his is the meaning of the Incarnation. An empire hich already knew a Jupiter sitting high on Olympus d hurling thunderbolts now comes to know a Savior hose only gifts are grace, forgiveness, peace. Men are know from now on that the greatest fact about our orld is that God is in it: God with His offer of power d life.

A visitor to the Holy Land might be forgiven if he ondered whether even the Church has always remem-red this. Over the traditional spot where the birth Christ took place, stands the Church of the Holy ativity. It is approached, says Daniel-Rops, "as if it ere a fortress." It has become the battleground of arring sects: one third administered by the Armenian urch, another by the Greek Church, and the remain-g third by Franciscan friars on behalf of the Roman atholic Church. Little wonder that Jerome, who chose live in a cell nearby, remarked, "It was not among ld and silver that our Savior came into the world." we would understand and appreciate what the first ristmas meant we are more likely to do it keeping mpany with the shepherds than touring sacred sites in e Holy Land. Ecclesiasticism can so easily obscure the ıd meaning of Faith. Here, as always, the prizes of ligion are for the lowly in heart.

And if the birth of Jesus was challenging to the empire e Romans had built up with such skill, it is even more allenging to our modern world. We may still travel e roads in Europe which Roman engineers laid down th such skill, but if today we lift up our eyes to the ue skies we behold something Roman legionaries never eamed of—winged messengers of death. Early Chris-n writers often contrasted an empire based on military wer with a Kingdom based on God's offer of grace, ercy, and peace. For us the contrast is even more star-tling. We are required to contrast the blessed reign of God in human hearts with a future based on atomic destruction. Is it surprising that some hear nothing but mockery in the sound of the bells of Bethlehem? Vain sound, they think, remembering how the nations now experiment with devastating bombs. They feel like Long-fellow (and with greater reason) when he wrote:

And in despair I bowed my head.
"There is no peace on earth," I said:
For hate is strong
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

Moods like this are bound to assail us as we reflect on the sad plight of the modern world. The young people in our churches have never known any other situation than world tension. All they know is that hostility and suspicion prevail across the continents. A considerable part of their incomes goes to the construction of death-dealing devices which are so frightening in their menace to human happiness. Can it be wondered at that a note of cynicism creeps into their outlook? Where can they turn? Does world statesmanship offer a way out? Is our unexampled advance in scientific power ushering in a brighter day? Have our economists any soothing word to offer?

This mood is understandable enough; but it is a mood in which we dare not linger. So we do well to recall that Longfellow's sad verse, already quoted, was followed by another. He wrote:

They pealed the bells more loud and deep.
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men."

That, if you like, is a faith; but it is a faith by which men can live.

Life and Peace

In a classic passage in his epistle to the Romans, Paul brought together two ideas which, in our experience, are rarely found together. "To be carnally minded is death," he wrote; "but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." It is this last conjunction of ideas that is so challenging. "Life and peace." These two words stand for realities not often found in partnership. Unhappily we know more about life and struggle, life and anxiety, life and frustration, life and fear. Were the apostle writing in the twentieth instead of in the first century

(Continued on page 1278)

Illustration by Sada Jones, for "Christmas," 1954

uletide is the loveliest time of year in Scandinavia . . .

thirty days hath christmas

Franklyn Morris

'N THE Lutheran lands of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, ancient customs add a charm and glow to is holy season which make the Christmas celebration ke none other in the world. Nature and men conspire make of Christmastime an extended holiday, and in nds where one needs to spend no time "dreaming of a hite Christmas," snow-covered village churches provide picturesque setting as Scandinavians gather to herald e birth of Christ. Many of the seasonal traditions have eir roots in the ancient Nordic past, some coming en from the days before Christianity's beams first rightened the Northern nations. Today, however, hristmas would not be so grand without the traditional ishes on the festive board or the time-honored holiday ustoms of St. Lucia's Day and Epiphany, of sleeping on e straw-strewn floor, and placing porridge in the barn ft for the "Christmas goblin."

he "Lucia Fest"

hristmas in Scandinavia begins with the lovely "Lucia estival" on St. Lucy's Day, December 13, and lasts ntil past Epiphany, ending on "St. Knut's Day," Janury 13, providing a full month of happy days in the idst of the wintry dark. Lucia was a Christian maiden artyred under Roman Emperor Diocletian, and the ory of her death was carried to Scandinavia, where e Christianized Vikings heard of her. They imagined er shining figure, crowned by a halo of light. Since er saint's day happens to fall on December 13, when aylight soon will increase after the dark winter months, e became a favorite with the people of the North. In ty homes and farmhouses alike, early in the dark orning the family is awakened by the daughter of the ouse, who serves coffee and newly baked buns to the ther members in bed. She is attired in a white, flowing own and on her head she wears a wreath of greenery n which stands a circle of lighted candles. The song he sings, "Santa Lucia," is a lilting old Italian melody. In recent years the celebration of "Lucia Day" has attracted enormous interest, and in the city of Stockholm an annual contest is held to pick the loveliest girl in the city as Stockholm's own Lucia Queen. Swedish Americans perpetuate the custom, and annually in Augustana Lutheran Church in Washington, D.C., as elsewhere, the "Lucia Fest" is held, to commemorate the martyred maid whose white-robed figure with a halo of fire brings joy and peace.

Mute was the night with gloom;
Now hear faint bustling.
In ev'ry silent room,
Like pinions rustling.
Lo! on our threshold there
White-clad, with flame-crown'd hair
Santa Lucia, Santa Lucia.

Christmas Eve Is a Busy Time

As in America, the day before Christmas is a hectic one. However, as though by a legal decree, all work must cease at four o'clock, and every city worker and shopper, every farmer in the fields, hurries homeward to the cozy confines of hearth and family. In the rural areas, the last bit of work is the placing of the largest sheaf of grain from the year's harvest high on a pole or on the gable of the house as a treat for winter birds. This practice goes back to old heathen rites in which the last scythe-swing of grain from the harvest was offered up to the pagan god of growth. There are other than earthly beings abroad this evening, some say, and there are those who put a bowl of Christmas porridge in the hayloft as a special treat for the family's "Barn Brownie," who is said to claim the stable as his domain. If the Brownie is overlooked, it may mean dire consequences

during the coming year: a harness strap may break just as the heavy sled begins to move, a cow might kick over a nearly full bucket of milk, or any one of a number of things might happen at the wrong time. On Christmas morn the porridge bowl is always found empty, though it is possible the barn cat may have helped to finish the meal.

A good scrubbing from head to toe is also part of the Yuletide preparation. This custom is accompanied by the practice of wearing something new on Christmas, and folk everywhere in Scandinavia have a good bath and a complete change of clothes for every member of the household on the afternoon of Christmas eve. On farms which had a bathhouse in which steam was produced by pouring water over red-hot stones, it was customary in times past for the last man out of the bathhouse to fire up well before he left; there might be others abroad that night who wished to use it.

When supper time arrives, the first course on "Julafton" always occurs in the kitchen. On the stove simmers a large iron pot of collected drippings of pork, sausage and corned beef. Slices of wort bread are speared on forks and dipped into the liquid until saturated. It is lucky to have the last dip, for this will insure a good year. When the "dipping" is over, dinner is served in the dining room, and the traditional menu is seldom varied. It is usually prefaced by a smorgasbord, and lutfisk, or lye-cured codfish, follows. Ham or pork is always present, and on the farms the slaughtering of the Christmas pig is a veritable ritual. It must be done in the first light of early dawn; one must face all corners of the compass and swear an oath. The pig was the special animal of the ancient heathen goddess Freya, the patroness of fertility, and to slaughter in the wrong way is to place in jeopardy next year's crop. Ri pudding or porridge is also a traditional Christmas e dish. In it lies hidden an almond, and legend wou have us believe that whoever finds it will marry befo the next Christmas. No less than fourteen varieties Christmas cookies and pastries adorn most Yuleti tables, and a cook needed a good memory in times pa when few recipes were written down. The baking the endless Christmas cookies was done in the light of new moon and under no circumstances when the wint sun stood above the horizon. If the dough rose well, good year was in prospect, but if the maid forgot cream a cake she would be a spinster for life. Is the any wonder that many a Swedish swain has been a monished by an old proverb: "Watch a young girl the dough pot rather than at the dance."

In rural areas the ancient custom of sleeping on t floor on Christmas Eve still persists. All the famil including the servants, sleep this night on the flo before the great fireplace of the home, for the spiri of the dead would be abroad and might want a restin place, and to deny them abode is an ill omen. Fre straw is laid upon the floor with great care, for t direction of the strands determines the luck of the ye to follow. Later, the straw is saved and strewn on t fields to insure good fortune.

The Christmas Tree Is a Newcomer

The ancient Norse Christians did not include a dec rated fir tree in their Yuletide decorations, though t "Yule Log" which is customary in England was to found everywhere. Only as late as the seventeenth ce tury did the "Christmas tree" make its appearance. Ho

(Continued on page 127

No less than fourteen varieties Christmas cookies and pastries ado most Yuletide tables. The bakin should be done in the light of a ne moon. . . .

Photo by Oscar Norberg, Stockholm

Oh, I Would Sing of Mary's Child

Oh, I would sing of Mary's Child
Cradled upon the hay,
And of the little birds that sang
For Him on Christmas day.
Oh, I would sing of Mary's Child
Who all God's children reconciled.

And I would sing a melody
That echoes through the land,
About the little ones who came
To touch His tiny hand.
Oh, I would sing a melody
Before this Child on bended knee.

Oh, I would sing of Jesus' birth
On that dear silent night,
And of the little stars that shone
On Him with heavenly light.
Oh, I would sing of Jesus' birth
That brought great joy to all the earth.

MELVA OREM

Three Oxen

Three young oxen, standing in a row
Warm at their manger, in the morning glow.

Said the big brown ox, "I saw a star,
Now it is near, last night it was far."

Said the little white ox, "I heard a baby cry;
Bedded in the straw and its mother sat by."

Said the little red ox, "Hark, how the bells ring;
The shepherds are coming, hear the angels sing."

Three young oxen, munching their corn,
Kneel one by one, in the Christmas morn.

SIGURD BERNHARD HUSTVEDT

The Word for Christmas Eve **Matthew 2:1-15**
Luke 2:1-20

O God, let us not be fooled this night by this seeming simplicity! Let us not forget that what happened in the Bethlehem stable is the deepest and greatest mystery of all—that Thou, King of all creation, took off the crown of Thy office and became a baby at Mary's breast. Thou, true God, emerged from the womb of a woman, naked, into the world, true Man! Amen.

And now, sing ye, rejoice ye, raise to heaven your voices in all the Christmas songs you know. If the tree is in such a position, march around it—singing!

Let the little ones give their Tree Program.

Christmas Day

With all the candles lit, sing:

Rejoice, rejoice this happy morn,
A Saviour unto us is born
The Christ, the Lord of glory;
His lowly birth in Bethlehem
The angels from on high proclaim,
And sing redemption's story;
My soul, extol
God's great favor,
Bless Him ever for salvation,
Give Him praise and adoration!

B. C. B

Excerpts from . . .

The Festiv

**For unto
us a Son is giv
shall be upon
name shall be
sellor, the Mig
Father, the Pri**

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man,
I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give Him,
Give my heart.

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

Christmas

A Book of Days
by Mary Hinderlie and Edna Hong

is born, unto
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he Everlasting
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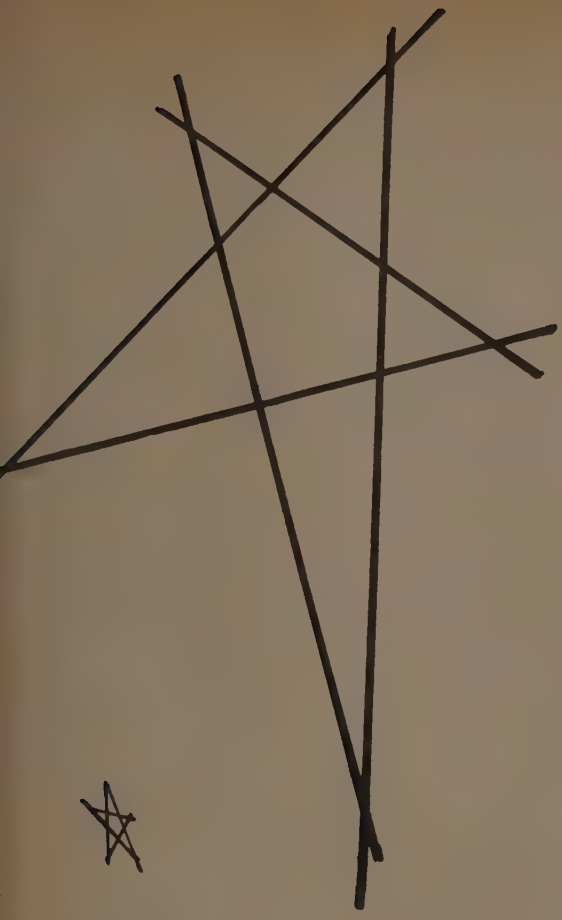


The Unicorn tramples no leaf.
Swift, untameable grace,
wise to the traps of men,
who sends You here?

How does the lap of the Virgin
tempt You from your domain?

You with the singular horn
Annunciate, Incarnate
borne from another world.

Out of the loins of Jesse
a seed and a tree ascend.
Who can dream this shoot
and who will beg to the topmost branch
that a mother's son come down?

The leaves with joyous hands
and the seven white doves that fly all around
let down immortal fruit
to living ground.

Poems by Maynard Stokka

Festival of Power (Continued from page 1269)

he would surely find additional arguments for the contrast he made between the carnal and the spiritual mind. Few would deny that our age is materially minded, economically minded, mechanically minded. Some would go further and declare with Paul Tillich that for multitudes death has obliterated the meaning and power of life. He writes, "Death has become powerful—that is to say that the end, the finite, and the limitations and decay of our being have become visible."

Into these gloomy thoughts steals again the music from Bethlehem, to remind us that God's will is life, His own life entering into ours. This is the greatest gift mankind ever received, so great indeed that Paul could only describe it as "unspeakable." These are the thoughts which flood our minds with light and hope as we bend before the manger cradle; that God has come into a world of weariness and despair, bringing life and immortality to light, opening the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

Like most ministers I have on the shelves of my library an array of books in which the theologians of the centuries have tried to come to terms with the meaning of the Incarnation. The latest addition to those volumes leads us, if we have patience, into involved discussions of what Kierkegaard called the "Divine Invader," and the mysteries of Existentialism, and Bultmann's "demythologisation" of the New Testament "Proclamation." We may not undervalue the work of these modern writers, but I find myself reflecting that the shepherds of whom we read in the Gospels would have been hopelessly bewildered by such language. Not least among the attractions of the gospel record is the simplicity of its language. The profoundest of all truths was declared in the simplest of settings and in terms which the wayfaring man can understand. The Christmas story bids us leave behind the complex, the elaborate, and dwell for a moment with a mother whose heart leaps with joy as she hears a baby cry; and with shepherds into whose fear and awe came the assuring words, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

There can be nothing better for any of us—industrialists, statesmen, economic planners, ordinary folk going about our undistinguished tasks—than to say to one another what the shepherds said long ago: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." We shall find ourselves singing with heartfelt fervor the lines with which Tate and Brady concluded their hymn:

> All glory be to God on high,
> And to the earth be peace;
> Goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
> Begin and never cease.

The Glad Refrain

Harold B. Kildahl

THE SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

December 30, 1956

Text: Luke 2:25-32

It happened once. Once, long ago in a lowly stable the midst of rude and humble circumstances a child w born, and of this child the angels sang: "He shall the joy of all the earth." It happened once. But it ha pens again and again, as the spirit of Christ is born human hearts, as the Christ Himself moves in up the lives of men, as the impulses of the Savior beco the motivations of men in relationship to God and m That's how it was one day in the temple where aged, pious man, Simeon by name, beheld the Lor Christ. It was then that the heart of Simeon g thanks to God and his spirit found the repose that G alone can give. It's a glad refrain that people have b singing and shouting down through the years as th have caught and held the meaning of the Christm festival. They have been charged with the light and power of heaven, and have found peace—the peace which the heavenly choirs sang so long ago.

The glad refrain—it was echoed in your church j a few days ago. At midnight, perhaps, or early in morning, or at near midday—the Gospel was read, news was repeated, the Word was sounded, and m hearts rejoiced as Simeon rejoiced. But don't let stop, now when the dull days of the week betw Christmas and New Year are with us. Don't let stop, not when the January weather, bleak and cold chill, settles down upon us. Don't let it stop, when become involved in your inventories and your incc tax payments. Don't let it stop when the corner of spr is turned and the promise of warmth and longer day at hand. Don't let it stop—not ever, because the g glad news of Christmas lingers through the year in heart of the believer, because he knows that with a Christmas there can be no Easter, without a cr there can be no cross, without a child there can be Savior.

I think we ought to be more like Simeon in Christian faith and life. We ought to be able to re nize the fact of God's goodness and His salvation in Christmas message and from that message find h contentment, peace and joy—all of these, and our sa tion now and eternally.

It's a glad refrain that Simeon spoke—"Mine have seen Thy salvation." Have you tried it lately? can sing it, even if you sing a bit off key—or if prefer, you can say it and pray it. I suggest you do

irty Days Hath Christmas

ntinued from page 1272)

er, in the land of the spruce, this German custom soon came the rule, and today the candle-decked Christmas e is to be found in homes and churches and market ıares alike. The use of candles, even in the electrified entieth century, is everywhere preferred, and in Den- rk red or white candles with small paper flags are ınd on every tree. For weeks before Christmas it is ıal for Nordic children to spend their evenings mak- paper chains, cones, and bells for the tree. Red ples and gilded pine cones are to be found on almost ery tree, along with the straw goat, a braided creature th long horns. This is the ancient animal of the god ıor. In Denmark, ginger cookies in the form of a ın and woman called "Nisse" and "Nasse" decorate e trees. At the topmost branch is, of course, the Christ- ıs star.

Christmas Day in the Morning . . ."

ry early on Christmas the family rises in the dark dawn to dress for the sunrise services in church. Each eets the other with "Merry Christmas and God be th you." Driving toward the churches throughout the ıntryside, the farmers carry torches on their sleighs, d over the snow-covered fields can be seen the lights ning from every direction toward the candle-lighted ırches. The flares are stuck in the snow outside the ırch as the worshipper enters, and there seem to be o candle-decked altars, one outside and one inside. visitors to Northern lands will attest, there is nothing compare with the joyous, somber, and mystical exper- ce of an early Christmas service at one of the Lu- ran churches, whether a stately cathedral at Lund, ondheim, or Roskilde, or one of the village churches. e glistening candles at the end of each pew and rrounding the ancient altar provide a majestic setting heralding the birth of the Saviour.

is glorious day that here we behold
From heaven itself hath descended.
advent is fraught with bliss manifold,
Great joy with its bounties is blended.
is day, Lord Most High, we beseech Thee to guard us
Against all sin and affliction.

econd Christmas" Day

December 26, the "Staffan's Ride" is an annual me in farming regions, and takes its name from the y in the Church calendar, for December 26 commemorates St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. After chores are done, the hired hands have a wild ride on horseback to see who can reach the spring or stream first. The victor has the privilege of drinking the "Staffan's Water" or "Christmas foam," the first draught from the spring, which is thought to insure health and progress during the year, and the real purpose of watering the horses is overlooked.

Stephen was a stable boy,
Glad thanks are beseeming.
Five colts he watered for employ,
All by the stars' bright beaming.
Daylight glimmer'd not at all,
But up above the Stars in heaven glisten'd.

The days between "Staffandag" and New Year's are spent visiting friends, and it is told that in some Swedish districts one must stop for a visit and refreshment at every house on the way, and hosts must receive all who come. It is impolite to have food in short supply, and though it is part of convention to ply each guest with food and drink, it is thought rude not to refuse!

The "Star Boys" of Epiphany

On January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, when the Three Wise Men were supposed to have arrived at Bethlehem, a procession of boys traditionally went the rounds of towns, singing and carrying before them a large, lighted star on a pole. Three would be dressed as the Magi Kings, while all sorts of costumes would be found in the retinue, including Herod and Judas with a purse. Epiphany means the end of the Christmas season in Scandinavia, but the Nordic folk are slow to discard the trappings of a festival so affectionately held by all. Not until Hilarymas, therefore, on January 13, called Knut's Day, is the Christmas table dismantled, and the straw swept from the floor. This gives a fine chance, naturally, for another party, and at the "Knut party" appears a person in showy rags who plays all sorts of jokes and comes to "sweep out Christmas," for "On twentieth-day Knut, we dance Christmas out." Apparently many a Scandinavian would have wished for a longer Christmas celebration, for the song is still popular which says "Christmas lasts until Easter," but the second line cautions, "This is not true, for Lent comes in between."

In Scandinavia, Christmas lasts a month, but the message of the Christ Child's birth sheds its holy light over centuries in the past. Its beams shine on to illumine with peace and joy the years yet to come.

Meditations for the Family Altar

J. R. Heste

TOWARD EPIPHANY

The Epistle: I Timothy 3:14-16

The Gospel: Matthew 4:13

Monday, December 31
KEEP IT GLOWING

Read Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light is come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

Sometimes we get the feeling that there is a big build-up to Christmas and then, all of a sudden, it's over. We wait for the "dust" to settle, get ourselves back on the routine of our schedules, and all life goes back to normal.

But we must not let it be this way. If we have been on guard, Christmas has been more to us than a round of fevered activities. We have seen the truth of Christmas and it has brought a blessing. We have worshipped the King.

And coming away from Christmas we must let its lustre abide in our hearts and show in our faces. "Arise, shine," says Isaiah. "The glory of the Lord has risen upon you."

God's people are not "Christmas Christians." Rather, they continue throughout the whole year in gratitude to God for the Light He has sent into this world. They keep that Light alive and glowing.

+ + +

Tuesday, January 1
SEEING STARS

Read Matthew 2:7-12

When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy, and going into the house they saw the child . . .

These Wise Men were more than star gazers, and they did not live by the stars, as foolish people are led to do. They were called wise men for a good reason. It was not any human wisdom they had, or a fund of information they had stored away in their minds. They were wise because they followed the Star that led them to the manger. They rejoiced when they saw the star and they followed it. The mysterious star led them to the Miracle of Light.

To this day Christians see stars. That is another way of saying they see things that those who are not God's children cannot see. And because they have this special sight they see life whole. Everything is seen and valued in the light of Christ.

This makes a difference in life. To see the stars of faith brings real joy into living. And you have a light to follow all the way along. It is good to have God's leading.

+ + +

Wednesday, January 2
THE SPREADING LIGHT

Read I Timothy 3:14-16

He was . . . preached among the tions, believed on in the world.

Sometimes we take this truth for gr ed. We say, sure; we have heard about sus. We learned about Him when we w little children. We heard of Him in S day school, confirmation class, in B class. We have heard many, many serm about Jesus, read books about Him. have pictures of Him on the walls of home.

We get so accustomed to it that we not realize what it would be like to know Him. Paul speaks to Timothy w amazement when he says that Jesus preached among the nations, and He believed on in the world. As far as P was concerned, he wasn't taking this w derful truth for granted at all. He ca it a mystery.

It is the sort of mystery that sho keep each of us quietly grateful to G His saving Word has reached us. We h been given power to believe it. The Li once kindled in God's plan long ago spread to reach even us.

+ + +

Thursday, January 3
MISSION

Read Luke 4:16-21

"He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind."

His old friends and neighbors were surprised to hear Jesus read the words from Isaiah, and afterwards say that He had come to fulfill them. They did not believe that He was the One who was sent.

But He was. He came on a mission to save man from sin. He had good news to tell, He had the key to open the prison house of sin, the power to open the eyes of the blind.

What is Jesus doing about the needs of people today? He has finished His work of making salvation possible, and now He is knocking on doors to bring that salvation to all who have need.

Has He come to you? His mission is for you also because it is a mission of love. His love leaves no one out unless the hand is raised against Him.

The words of Jesus, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing," have true meaning for many. They must have meaning for you and for me.

Friday, January 4
HOW FAR GOD?

Read Isaiah 49:1-6

"I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth."

A man once wrote a book called, "Your God Is Too Small." He pointed out the many, little ideas people have of God; how they try to limit Him, making Him small, and almost human in His nature and ways. Then he makes it clear that you cannot do that to God. God is big and cannot be thought of in strictly human terms.

Everything about God is big, including His love. The light that He brought to the world was not meant for Israel only. Israel was not going to have it good while the rest of the world stumbled along in darkness. It was God's plan to include the whole world—"That my salvation may reach the end of the earth."

This inclusive love of God has reached even me, and God wants to use me in the continued outreach of His Kingdom. At times God may depend on a word from me, or an act of faith, in His reaching out.

Saturday, January 5
THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

Read Matthew 12:15-21

"And in his name will the Gen hope."

It was a long time ago that Isa uttered these words when he spoke prophecy about Jesus. He saw the t that over all the world men and wo and little children would look up in f to Christ.

Jesus is the hope of the world. many years ago a great church convent had this as its theme. In the midst of the troubles of the world there is only answer. That answer is not in agreem between nations which can be broken easily, nor is it to be found in crea bigger armies and navies and all sorts armaments. Nor is there hope in the g things that man can do.

There is but one hope, and tha Christ who answers all needs with power and peace. To this hope we m look and upon this we must depend.

"Men," wrote a pastor to a group fellow pastors, after his wife had died. know better now than ever I did bef there is but one hope and that is Chri

lere and There on the Christian Front

Edited by Raymond M. Olson

SSIONARIES IN EGYPT

ne 60 British missionaries have been ed under house arrest in Egypt and be expelled from the country, ac- ding to reports made at the Na- al Council of Churches' Division Foreign Missions annual meeting. nch missionaries in Egypt, who are and mainly Roman Catholic, like- e face expulsion.

Reports received in this country in- ate that two major British mission ions have been closed. These sta- s represented about 25 per cent of total Protestant missionary activity Egypt. They were operated by the urch Mission Society of the Church England and the Egyptian General ssion, an interdenominational enter- e. Mission leaders agreed that Brit- missionary effort in Egypt is "about shed."

Activity by United States missionar- has generally not been curtailed. All he estimated 300 American mission- es in Egypt are staying at their posts, only mothers with young children e been evacuated. Spokesmen said t the mission enterprise in general "suffered a serious setback" in the ddle East. In Syria, they said, the British missionaries have left the ntry at the "suggestion" of the in- enous churches.

,000 CHURCHES NEEDED

out 100,000 new Protestant churches be needed in the next 20 years in country, the president of the Meth- st Council of Evangelism reported he first annual meeting of his group. ed on the current rate of growth, re will be about 38,500,000 more testants in the U. S. two decades n now, Dr. George A. Fallon said. He arrived at the figure of 100,000 rches on the basis of a present aver- of 328 members in Protestant con- gations. He said that the Methodist urch should build at least one rch a day for the next 20 years.

The major purpose of the meeting to develop a Methodist evangelistic tegy for the next 20 years. About Methodist lay and clergy leaders nded.

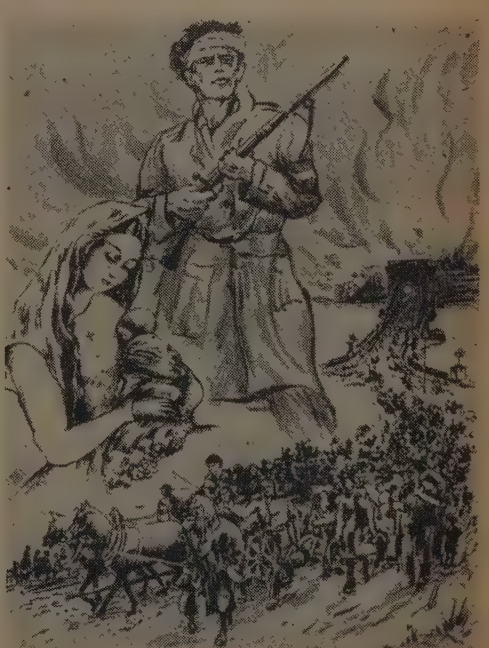
IN APPRECIATION . .

With this issue the editor of these pages concludes nearly seven years of a very interesting exploration of events and opinions "on the Christian Front." It has been clear that the Church is at work in the world quite apart from our own church body and our more intimate associations. God has courageous witnesses and imaginative spirits in all lands. Indebtedness to Dr. O. G. Malmin and the other members of the staff of "Lutheran Herald" has accumulated during these years. We welcome Pastor Gentz, the new editor of the news section, most warmly.

BIBLE SOCIETY PLANS LARGER PROGRAM

Plans for extensive expansion of the American Bible Society's program during the next 25 years were disclosed at the 38th annual meeting of its Advisory Council. Dr. Eugene A. Nida, associate secretary in charge of translations, said it was likely that within the next quarter century, the society would accomplish 110 revisions of whole Bibles, 150 translations of Old Testaments, 200 translations of New Testaments, and 225 translations of Gospels into new languages. The expansion program is necessary, he said, because of an unprecedented increase in world literacy and a growing nationalism which makes Bibles in "colonial" languages unacceptable.

The Rev. Paul A. Collyer, an associate secretary in charge of foreign distribution, reported that difficulties are created by the growing spirit of nationalism, particularly in Asia and Africa and to a lesser extent in Latin America. This makes it necessary to distribute Scriptures through member groups of the United Bible Societies and on the basis of international cooperation. Within the next decade, he said, national Bible societies will be or-



RNS Photo

POSTER SHOWS HUNGARIAN TROUBLE—This poster depicting Soviet-terrorized Hungarians fleeing out of their country will be distributed in the free world to promote aid for the refugees. Also available in postcard size, the poster shows a Russian armed soldier standing over a mother and child. It was designed by the German artist Hans Philipp of Munich, Germany, and is being distributed in Munich for the Hungarian refugees.

ganized in Mexico, Argentina, the Philippines, and probably France. These new societies will be responsible for their own policies and administration even though the older Bible societies will be committed to their support.

Mr. Collyer warned that the American Bible Society must provide more attractively printed Scriptures in other languages "in order to command the attention of the masses." This is especially important in areas where propagation of the Gospel is meeting a new and oft-times fanatical resistance on the part of the devotees of revived national religions.

PROPOSAL TO CHANGE TRUST FUND TAX RULE CHALLENGED

A Baptist official urged the House Ways and Means Committee to reject a proposal by the Treasury Department that would make it more difficult for philanthropists to set up reversionary trust funds to benefit churches, hospitals, and colleges. George L. Shearin, secretary and legal counsel of the endowment department of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, told a sub-committee on tax revision that the proposal is contrary to established public policy of encouraging private charitable gifts. He said it would cause hardship to Baptist institutions.

At present, if a donor gives irrevocable control over the income from a reversionary trust to a charitable institution for a period of two years or more, the income is tax-exempt during the time of use by the charitable group, even though the donor may take back the property given to the trust whenever he wishes. The Treasury, calling this a "loophole" that has been abused, has asked Congress to require that income of the trust be given to charity for a minimum of ten years to qualify for tax exemption.

"There are a few individuals who can and will give up a portion of their income for two, three, or possibly five years to help institutional beneficiaries," Mr. Shearin told the subcommittee, "but how many individuals can see their way clearly ahead for ten years? In this age of heavy taxes, if a man can afford to give up income for ten years then he can afford to give it up permanently, and there is no need for the reversionary provision."

RNS Photo

TO STUDY IN LATIN AMERICA—These six youth leaders from five nations left New for a three-month tour of Latin and South America to study programs of Protestant yo people there. The tour is sponsored by the World Council of Christian Educatio cooperation with the youth department of the World Council of Churches. Member the ecumenical team are, left to right: Keith Hillyer, Toronto, Canada; Elia Peter, S India; George A. Williams, Cleveland, Ohio; Jacques Maury, France; Ethel Shellenber Philadelphia; and the Rev. Bengt-Thure Molander, Geneva, head of the World Cour youth department and leader of the group. The team attended the Fourth Congress of Union of Latin American Evangelical Youth at Barranquilla, Colombia.

RNS Photo

CHILDREN'S STAMP—This three-cent commemorative Children's Stamp of 1956 placed on sale in mid-December by the U. S. Post Office Department. Theme of the st is "Friendship—the Key to World Peace." The stamp's central design shows a g representing the children of the world assembled at the left and looking toward the " of Friendship" with which to unlock the doors to peace. In a light panel at the top the words spelling out the theme.

Within the E.L.C.

SEMINARY CHOIR TO TOUR FOUR MIDWEST STATES

The 32-voice choir of Luther Theological Seminary, under the direction Mr. Gerhard Cartford, will present concert of sacred music in at least elve ELC churches in January. Dr. hn V. Halvorson of the Seminary culty will accompany the choir and eak at each concert. Mr. Cartford is oir director and organist at the Semiry and also minister of music at ethel Church in Minneapolis. Itinery of the choir will be as follows:

Saturday, Jan. 12—La Crosse, Wis.
Sunday, Jan. 13—Viroqua, Wis.
Sunday, Jan. 13—Sparta, Wis.
Sunday, Jan. 13—Tomah, Wis.
Monday, Jan. 14—Stoughton, Wis.
Wednesday, Jan. 16—Chicago, Ill.
Thursday, Jan. 17—Muskegon, Mich.
Friday, Jan. 18—Alpena, Mich.
Sunday, Jan. 20—Ishpeming, Mich.
Sunday, Jan. 20—Minocqua, Mich.
Sunday, Jan. 20—Woodruff, Wis.
Monday, Jan. 21—Rice Lake, Wis.

The choir still has two open dates to filled: Tuesday, Jan. 15 and Saturay, Jan. 19.

PERSONS

The Rev. Clifton L. Bruland, pastor of Ridgeway Church near Decorah, Iowa, and his family were involved in a two-car, two-truck accident near Cresco, Iowa on Thanksgiving day. Mrs. Bruland and a young daughter, Martha, received serious head injuries from which they are reported improving. Pastor Bruland received only minor injuries and another daughter, Kathryn, was uninjured. The Bruland automobile was virtually demolished.

The Rev. Owen Gangstead has resigned as pastor of Grace Church, Chicago, to accept the call to Immanuel Church, Forest City, Iowa, where he will become pastor in March.

The Rev. Conrad Englestad, pastor of Zion Church, Chicago for the past 36 years, preached his farewell sermon on December 2. He is retiring to reside in Southern California.

The Rev. Russell A. Peterson has resigned as president of Dakota Lutheran Academy, Minot, N. Dak., effective February 1. He will resume graduate studies at the University of North Dakota. The Rev. Harold Kildahl, Jr., pastor of First Church, Minot, will serve as acting president of the academy.

NNEAPOLIS CHURCH DEDICATES PARISH HOUSE—The University Lutheran Church Hope, Arndt W. Halvorson, pastor, dedicated its new parish house and chapel on Nov. Dr. Joseph L. Knutson, president of Concordia College, preached at the morning servs, and former pastor C. S. Thorpe gave the main address at the dedication services in afternoon and performed the rite of dedication. Architects were Sovik and Associates, rthfield, Minn.

Who's Who In This Issue

In "The Little Red Fire Engine," free-lance writer ERLING ROLFSRUD has done his usual fine job in his portrayal of a small boy's Christmas spirit.

DR. F. TOWNLEY LORD has been pastor of London's well known Bloomsbury (Baptist) Church for the past 27 years. For about 15 years he was also editor of "The Baptist Times," one of the leading church papers in Great Britain. He served as president of the Baptist World Alliance from 1950-55. He is author of "The Festival of Power and Life."

FRANKLYN MORRIS, author of "Thirty Days Hath Christmas," is a ULCA pastor at First Lutheran Church in Johnstown, Penna. He does a good deal of free-lance writing.

Our poetry contributors for this Christmas issue are GRACE NOLL CROWELL, widely published poet; GERTRUDE HANSON, member of the League of Minnesota Poets and active member of Bethel Church in Minneapolis; MELVA ROREM, assistant editor of the "Lutheran Herald"; the late SIGURD BERNHARD HUSTVEDT, a university professor who wrote several books on ballads and folklore; MAYNARD STOKKA, pastor of the Park-Rollag parish near Hawley, Minn. On the back cover is a lovely poem by NAIDA KNATVOLD, who is secretary to the president of the ELC.

Dr. R. E. Haugan, manager of Augsburg Publishing House, is the subject of an article in the December issue of "Christian Herald." Featured in the sketch is Dr. Haugan's editing of "Christmas," now in its 26th year, as well as his work on all of the publications of the Church.

Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, president emeritus of The Evangelical Lutheran Church, will preach the sermon of the Norwegian Christmas service to be broadcast over WCAL, Northfield, Minn., at 8:15 a.m. Christmas Day. Other foreign language services will be

NOTICE

The index for Volume XL will be published in Vol. XLI, No. 1, dated January 1, 1957. Extra copies of this issue for those who wish to bind their Herald copies will be available from the Subscription Department, Augsburg Publishing House, 426 South Fifth St., Minneapolis 15, Minn.

broadcast during the morning on the regular Sunday schedule of the station.

The Rev. Everett N. Nelson of Kenyon, Minn. has accepted the call to become the pastor of Salem Church, Roland, Iowa on April 1. **The Rev. Olaf Holen,** pastor at Roland for the past 30 years, will retire from the active ministry and move to Ames, Iowa.

The Rev. Caroll Satre of Blooming Prairie, Minn. has accepted the call to be pastor of St. Paul's Church, Minneapolis, and will arrive there on January 20. **Dr. George Aus** of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, has served as interim pastor of St. Paul's.

The Rev. Russell Osnes has resigned as pastor of St. Paul's and Bethany Churches in Ephraim, Wis. to join the staff of Ascension Church, Milwaukee, Wis., as associate pastor.

DISTRICTS

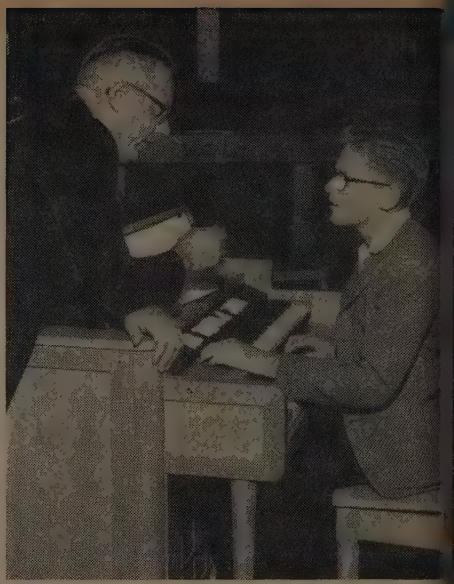
Southern Minnesota

Bloomington, Minn. Christ the King Church in this suburb south of Minneapolis was dedicated at two services on December 2, by Dr. E. C. Reinertson, Southern Minnesota district president. This first unit of the home mission congregation is located on six acres of former farm land on the new route of highway 65. A chapel seating 200, a large assembly hall, an office and kitchen are included in the one-story brick building. Nearby stands an old red brick farmhouse, completely repainted and repaired, which is now used for Sunday school classes and nursery during the church services. Organized in February, 1956, the congregation now numbers 650 members.

Funds to finance the church building and parsonage were made available by ELC congregations and individuals in the Lac qui Parle circuit. A congregational budget of $30,000 is anticipated for 1957 in this young church, of which the Rev. Milo Engelstad is the pastor. While still in its first year, the church is also helping a refugee family from Germany, Mr. and Mrs. Oskar Kirchner and their son, Wilhelm, begin a new life in the United States.

Eastern

La Crosse, Wis. A new parish hall and chapel building for St. Paul's Church was dedicated on October 14 by Dr. George Aus of Luther Seminary, St. Paul. The Rev. I. M. Gjellstad of Decorah, Ia., a former pastor of the congregation, was the speaker at the morning worship services on dedication day. The Rev. Arthur M. Feroe is pastor of the parish.



YOUTHFUL CALIFORNIA ORGANIST—Arlo Larson, at the organ, gets instructions from his father, the Rev. Clifford O. Larson, on the music for the children's worship service at Clairemont Church in San Diego, California. Attendance at the 9:30 a.m. worship is made up largely of children in grades one through six. Ushers and choir, as well as the organist, are provided by the children of the church for this forty-minute liturgical service which is conducted by the pastor. The service is followed by class sessions. The organ was presented to the young congregation by a family of the church, who are paying for it in monthly installments.

Photo by San Diego Evening Tribu

South Central

Cedar Rapids, Iowa. A roomy four-bedroom parsonage has recently been erected by St. Stephen's Church for its pastor, the Rev. Norris L. Wogen, and his family. One of many interesting features of this new home is a semi-basement study provided for the pastor. The room has sound-proofed walls and a stone fireplace. The home was recently featured in a two-page spread in the Cedar Rapids Gazette.

California

Phoenix, Ariz. Bethel Church, the second ELC congregation organized in Phoenix, reports that a group of 14 families was received into membership on November 4, bringing the total to 286 souls for this 11-month-old congregation. Bethel worshippers recently moved into their new first-unit church and are presently getting ready for its dedication on January 20, 1957, one day less than a year from the organization of the congregation. The Rev. L. Olav Tolo is pastor.

Canada

Camrose, Alta. Reports of progress and plans for the future were heard and considered at the annual association meeting of the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute on November 28. Dean A. M. Vinge reported that the largest class in the history of the school was graduated last spring, and that four former graduates were this year commissioned as foreign missionaries. T "Bible Tidings," official publication the school, now has a mailing list 4,000. The school also sponsors a wee ly radio broadcast over station CFCV called "Priceless Treasure." The asso ation members took action to celebra the 25th anniversary of the institut in 1957 by gathering a $25,000 "Jubil Fund."

ANNIVERSARIES

Sixtieth at Edison Park, Ill.

The Edison Park Lutheran Ch dren's Home celebrated its 60th an versary on December 5. The Rev. R Harrisville of Mason City, Ia., was t speaker.

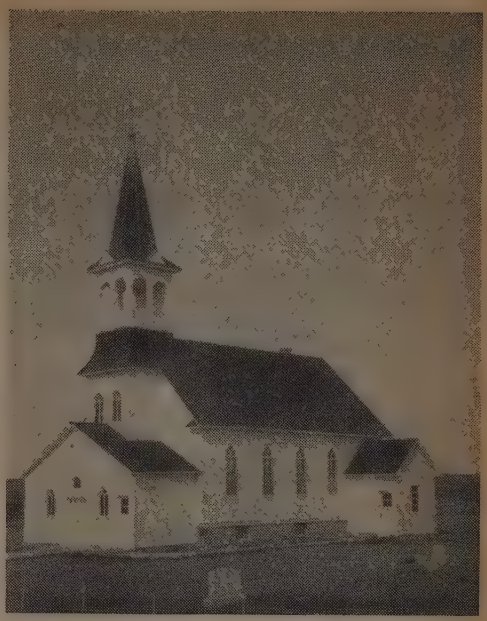
OBITUARIES

Mr. Magnus E. Reishus, for 30 ye an active member of Central Churc Tacoma, Wash., died at his home October 25, at the age of 66 years. Bo in Rushford, Minn., Mr. Reishus ca to Tacoma in 1919 and was a memb of the staff of the Metropolitan L Insurance Co. until his retirement disability. He served as a member the Home Mission committee of Pacific district for several years a as a member of the Church Council The Evangelical Lutheran Church.

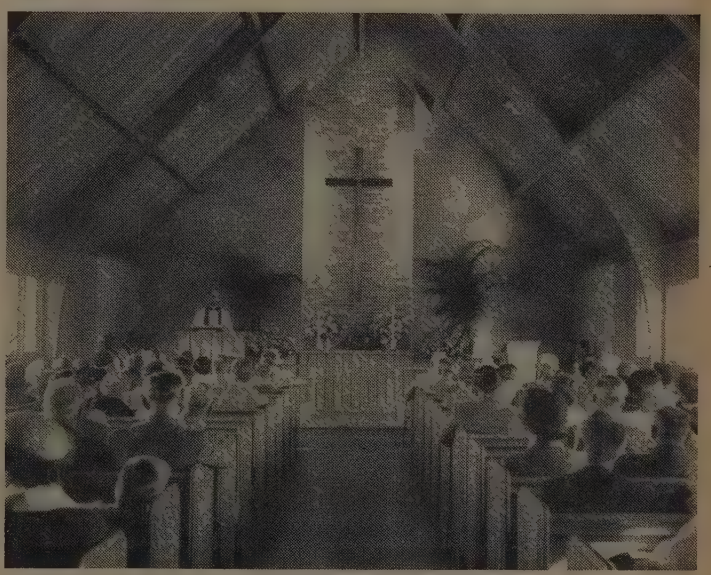
The Rev. C. Havig-Gjelseth, a f mer pastor of The Evangelical Luth an Church, died in Oslo, Norway November 20 at the age of 78 yea A graduate of Luther Theologi

minary, St. Paul, and the University Chicago, Pastor Havig-Gjelseth held storates in Nelson, Wis.; Chicago, ; and Staten Island, New York. In 20 he was called as a teacher at the ner Mission Bible School in Oslo, here he served until his retirement in 35.

The Rev. Peter J. Nestande died on ovember 19 at the age of 82. He was rn January 22, 1875 near Fairfax, inn. He was a graduate of the Madi- n Lutheran Normal School, St. Olaf ollege, and the United Church Semi- ry. He was ordained in 1903. Pastor estande served two parishes: Dodge- lle, Wis. from 1903-1915 and Lanes- ro, Wis. 1915-51. He had been re- ed since 1951. Funeral services were ld at Our Savior's Church in Fair- x. on November 23 and burial was the Zion Church cemetery near irfax. Memorial services were also ld in four parishes: in Bethlehem and nion Prairie Churches of the Lanes- ro parish, in Grace Church at Pres- n, Minn., in Lake Nokomis Church Minneapolis where a son, Constan- e, is the pastor, and at Bethlehem urch in Longmont, Colo., where stor and Mrs. Nestande were mem- rs after his retirement. Survivors in- de his wife, Mrs. Bertha Nestande, resident of Ebenezer Home in Min- apolis, a daughter, Mrs. Marion ckes, and a son, the Rev. Constan- e Nestande of Minneapolis.



REDEDICATION AT CROSBY, N. DAK.—On Oct. 21, the Troy Evangelical Lutheran Church shown here rededicated its church building after extensive remodeling. The Rev. J. W. Rosholt, who was pastor of the church when it was built in 1915 and who served the congregation for 15 years, performed the service of rededication. All of the circuit pastors participated in the event. Orlin E. Ness is pastor of the congregation.



GLENCOE, MINNESOTA—Dr. F. A. Schiotz, president of The Evangelical Lutheran Church, delivered the sermon at the recent dedication of Christ Church. The parish was organized in February, 1955, a project of the home mission department of the ELC. At the time of organization, neighboring Vinje Church in Willmar indicated a willingness to loan their credit and thus become the "sponsoring congregation." At the same time they gave the new congregation a gift of $2,500. The new building, however, was financed through a local loan without the need of the sponsoring congregation's signature. Cost of the building was $30,000. It includes the sanctuary, which seats 200, plus a Sunday school assembly room, study, and kitchen. Dr. E. C. Reinertson, president of the Southern Minnesota district, conducted the rite of dedication. Pastor of Christ Church is Nolan A. Watson.

NOTICE

On Thursday evening, January 17, 1957, the Board of Christian Education of The Evangelical Lutheran Church will sponsor a dinner in honor of Dr. and Mrs. J. C. K. Preus, marking the retirement of Dr. Preus from twenty-five years of service as executive director of the Department of Christian Education. All friends of Dr. and Mrs. Preus are invited to attend. The dinner will be at 6:00 p.m. in Dayton's Skyroom, 7th and Nicollet, in Minneapolis. The cost will be $3.00. Reservations and remittance should be sent to Dr. Sidney A. Rand, 422 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis 15, before January 10.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

For sale: Medo Lutheran Lydia Society cookbook. $1.25 postpaid. Write Mrs. Ben Lindeland, Pemberton, Minn.

Needed badly: 25 or more copies of Concordia Hymnal. Write Pastor Otto F. Keller, Rt. 3, Box 352-A, Kent, Wash.

For sale: 40 black choir gowns. Write G. R. Johnson, Treasurer, First Lutheran Church, Blooming Prairie, Minn.

Parish Conservation Service

(Formerly The Placement Service)

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FOR SALE

Farms

Located in Ia., 7 mi. south of Spring Grove, Minn. 218 acres; 110 tillable; modern house and complete set of farm bldgs. on 138 acre plot; house, garage and barn adjoining 80 acres; 2 mi. to Lutheran church. 493-1A

A 1,040 acre farmland for sale or trade in NW Minn., very reasonable. If trade, would prefer the Flathead of Montana or some other good business territory. 493-2A

169 acre dairy farm for sale in Winneshiek County, Ia. 115 acres crop land, balance is pasture. 7 room house; running water; 36x80 dairy barn; silo; granary; machine shed; hog barn; chicken house; double corn crib; REA and 6½ mi. to town; ½ mi. to Lutheran church; on school bus route. 493-3A

120 acre farm for sale located near Kensett, Ia. Very productive, mile from Lutheran Church. 493-4A

80 acre well improved farm near London, Minn. All tillable. 493-5A

80 acres of bare land near St. Ansgar, Ia. Good fences and on main road. 493-6A

20 acre farm near Northwood, Ia. Good location, very attractive. 493-7A

165 acre farm for sale located in Glenville, Ia., area. May be purchased on contract and immediate possession. 493-8A

160 acre farm near Northwood, Ia. Excellent improvements; water system and school bus route. 493-9A

20 acres near Mona, Ia. Good improvements. School bus route and ⅛ mi. from Lutheran church. 493-10A

120 acre farm located near Grafton, Ia. All tillable. Improvements outstanding; 1 mile from Lutheran church. 493-11A

107 acre farm located near Northwood, Ia. All tillable. Can be had on reasonable contract with small down payment. 493-12A

40 acre farm for sale in Polk County, Minn. 1½ mi. from town on US Hwy. No. 2. Good soil and buildings. Can give good terms. Near a Lutheran church. 493-13A

70 acre farm located near Northwood, Ia. All tillable; water system. On school bus route. 493-14A

NOTICE

There will be no Mid-Winter Evangelism Conference in January, 1957. The next conference will be held in 1958.

EVANGELISTS' SCHEDULES DURING JANUARY

Carl Opsahl:

6-10 Preaching Mission
Eureka, Kansas
M. E. Ingebretson, Pastor

13-17 Preaching Mission
Texhoma, Texas
J. P. Knudson, Pastor

Oscar C. Hanson:

6-10 Preaching Mission
Oak Grove Lutheran—Mpls.
Clifford Johnson, Pastor

20 Evangelism Rally
Emmons, Minn.
Carl J. Hanson, Pastor

P-T-R MISSIONS

January—1957

13 ..... Waco, Texas
Evangelism Staff Participating: Oscar Hanson, T. F. Gullixson, Agnar S. Tanner, and G. S. Helgesen.

15 ..... Phoenix, Arizona
Evangelism Staff Participating: Conrad M. Thompson

20 ..... Tuscon—(ULCA)
Evangelism Staff Participating: Conrad M. Thompson

27 ..... Omaha, Nebraska
(NLC and possibly Mo. Synod)
Evangelism Staff Participating: Oscar Hanson, G. S. Helgesen, Agnar Tanner, and T. F. Gullixson

40 acre farm near Northwood, Ia.; on school bus route. Can be had on contract. 493-15A

Homes

3 bedroom, 2 story residence for sale in Northwood, Ia. All insulated; wall to wall carpeting; baseboard heat; new kitchen and bath. Excellent retirement home, near church. 493-16B

Large, all year around, 4 bedroom house on a good fishing lake in a town of 1500 population. Can be used commercially or as a home; fully carpeted. New Lutheran church in town. 493-17B

Small, 2 story, 2 bedroom home in Northwood, Ia. Full basement, gas furnace; all remodeled and redecorated. 493-18B

6 room residence in Kensett, Ia. Gas heat and city water. 493-19B

House and garage for sale in Kensett, Ia., plus extra lot. 493-20B

New bungalow-type, 2 bedroom house in Northwood, Ia. 493-21B

4 bedroom house in Northwood, Ia. Completely remodeled. 493-22B

2 story, 4 bedroom house in Northwood, Ia. In excellent condition. 493-23B

2 story house plus double garage in Northwood, Ia. In good condition. 493-2

2 bedroom house for sale in Forest C Ia., with garage. Recently redecorated. E lot can be sold. 493-

Businesses

4 unit apartment bldg. in Northwood, All apts. occupied and can be purchased very reasonable contract. 493-2

Blacksmith, welding shop for sale in land, Ia. 30 x 70 double wall brick and bldg., well equipped with blacksmith w ing tools for all general repair. 493-2

Small restaurant business for sale in No wood, Ia. Outstanding business. 493-2

International Harvester Dealership for in northern Iowa. New Bldg. Will trade land in the Dakotas or Montana. 493-2

Gamble Store for sale in Northwood, Excellent business; low overhead and st investment. 493-3

FOR RENT

Attractive room in Christian home. Bo optional or kitchen privileges if want Near Nicollet busline, Minneapolis. 493-3

First floor, 3 room apartment for re with kitchen, living room and bedroom. F bath upstairs; ½ bath on first floor. Ne decorated. Heat and utilities furnished; la dry facilities in basement. Available mediately. Children acceptable. 493-3

WANTED TO RENT

160 acre farm or more. 493-3
160 acres or more. 493-3

POSITIONS WANTED

Wanted, a housekeeping job in Minneap or the suburbs thereof. 493-3

Man desires to operate a bulk oil stat for a major oil company with option buy. Has had experience. Prefers Luthe community in western states. 493-3

HELP WANTED

Nurse needed in Skaalen Sunset Ho Stoughton, Wis to supervise a 24 bed firmary and to live in. Vacations, sick lea social security are offered as well as B Shield and Blue Cross. R.N. preferred. Sal open. 493-

Parish Worker Wanted in congregation west-central Wis. Visitation and youth wo Some secretarial work. In city of about 4 and near city of 50,000. New church. N Educational Unit within a few years. A some choir work but not a necessity. 493-

M.D. needed in town of 500 in eastern Dak. House for office available. Commun has money available and is willing to h doctor until set up in practice. 493-3

Minneapolis ELC Church desires full t minister of music. Experienced person p ferred. Service to begin August 1, 1957. 493-

A man to help lift bed and wheel c patients; must be able to drive a car; su vise male baths—in short a handy r around an old people's home. 493-

Mortician and manager wanted for a neral association in a Lutheran commun 493-

Wanted a shoemaker in a west cen Wis. city of 1800. Active Lutheran chur good high school and county seat town. 493-4

Wanted married couple for turkey rais and general farm work. Separate house w running water. Start immediately. 493-4

CHANGES OF ADDRESS FOR ELC PASTORS

P. I. Anderson, 6 Dianthus Road 1-A, Yao Yat Chuen, Kowloon, Hong Kong, 11-28-56

Conrad N. Engelstad, 889 Matilijo Road, Glendale 2, Calif. (Temp.) 12-5-56

M. O. Ensberg, 5403 S. Central Ave., Phoenix, Ariz. (Temp.) 11-28-56

Alfred Fornes, 7706 Casino Road, Everett, Wash., 12-3-56

Hj. S. Froiland, Sunburg, Minn., 3-1-57

Robert D. Giles, 231 Ave. B, Redondo Beach, Calif., 8-1-56

E. C. Goetz, 525 N. Division, Powell, Wyo., 9-1-56

J. S. Halvorson, Roseau, Minn., 12-1-56

Harris E. Kaasa, 212 2nd St. S. E., Watertown, S. Dak., 11-29-56 (Correction)

Floyd R. Lien, 215 Constand Ave., Staten Island 2, N. Y., 12-31-56

Norman I. Olson, 2419 Como Ave., St. Paul 8, Minn., 12-25-56

C. N. H. Otte, P.O. Ntumeni, Zululand, S. Africa, 12-7-56

D. W. Preus, 24 S. Howard, Vermillion, S. Dak., 12-1-56 (Correction)

Edwin Sandvig, 417 Second St., Woodburn, Ore., 12-30-56

J. N. Skepstad, P.O. Box 2336, Parkland Branch, Tacoma, Wash.

E. C. Thompson, P.O. Box 2336, Parkland Branch, Tacoma, Wash.

Jersing Thompson, 524 Third St., Cut Bank, Mont., 11-29-56 (Correction)

C. S. Thorpe, Altoona, Florida (Temp.) 12-1-56

T. G. Wicks, Kerkhoven, Minn., 12-10-56

N. L. Wogen, 3220 Iowa Ave. S. E., Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Correction) 12-1-56

I. B. Sorensen, 2307 7th St., Emmetsburg, Iowa, 9-1-56

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Free to the first caller: 20 used pews, seating 60 to 80 people. Leg on one end, braced against wall on other; 10 left- and 10 right-side pews. Write Harold L. Merrill, Fisher Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fisher, Minn.

For Sale: Large church bell in good condition. Write the Rev. Wayne L. Henderson, Blue River, Wis.

Free to any congregation which can use them: an altar, a pulpit, two hymn number racks with numbers, and three chancel chairs. Write J. Minor Bergen, Bergen's Drug Store, Iola, Wis.

For Sale: Cookbook published by Sarah Mission Circle of Salem Ladies Aid. 70 pages of tested recipes. Price, $1.00. Send orders to Mrs. James L. Kay, Lake Mills, Iowa.

ESTONIAN AMERICANS IN SAN FRANCISCO—Trinity Church, San Francisco, has done an outstanding job of welcoming into its midst displaced persons and refugees from Estonia. More than 100 who are members of the parish and 500 who live in Northern California are represented by the group pictured here. Left to right: Dr. Leon Rinner, president of the Estonian fellowship at Trinity; Mr. William Hutchinson, president of the congregation; The Rev. Karl Lipping, Estonian evangelist; four Estonians in national costume, recent arrivals in the United States; the Rev. Warren Heggem, pastor at Trinity; and Mr. O. Willing (holding the Estonian flag), who emigrated to the United States 40 years ago.

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FOR SALE

Farms

240 acre farm in central Minn. $67.00 per acre. 6 room house; full basement; barn 32x52; silo 14x35 brick roof and other bldgs. 2 gas pumps with tanks. Can be bought on easy terms at 4% interest. 494-1A

8 room house for sale in Dawson, Minn. Close to school and church. Only 3 blocks from down town. 494-2B

Well established International and New Idea Dealership in Southern Minn. Can be purchased in whole or in part; terms will be extended. Will consider real estate trade. Low rent. Owner unable to carry on due to ill health. 494-3C

A Gospel Book Store for sale in a town of 7,000 in northern Ia. Strong Protestant trade center. Predominantly Lutheran. 494-4C

FOR RENT

Furnished modern 4 room bungalow, with garage. Available until May 1st, 1957 to a responsible couple. Convenient to state capitol; near Como Park in St. Paul. 494-5B

POSITIONS WANTED

Woman desires work as a practical nurse in a sanatorium. Prefers Minn. or N. Dak. To begin work after January 1st, 1957. 494-6D

Woman desires position as church secretary somewhere in the northwest. Available at once. 494-7D

HELP WANTED

Wanted a Christian head nurse, R.N. or L.P.N. in an ELC old people's home in central Iowa. 494-8F

Registered nurses wanted in a 25 bed hospital in central Calif. Thrifty community; good schools; active ELC Church. 494-9F

Needed at once, Christian nurses in Alaska. 494-10F

Wanted a supt. of nurses and an R.N. for a fully accredited hospital located in NW Montana—gateway to scenic wonders. 494-11F

Kitchen supervisor, able to cook and supervise kitchen staff. Experience helpful. Lutheran Children's Home in NE Ia. 494-12F

Office supervisor and bookkeeper in children's home in NE Ia. Training and experience essential. 494-13F

Wanted a case aide, male, Bachelors Degree with major in social work or sociology. Position open June 1, 1957. 494-14G

Wanted a good plumber and furnace man. Ability to do some electrical work would be an asset. Located in a community with good grade and high school and Lutheran church. 494-15G

Laboratory technician with experience wanted in a new hospital and small clinic. Excellent salary. Room and board furnished free. 494-16G

The Lutheran Herald Index, 1956

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Mrs. Paul F. Henzler

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Sheep huddled against sheep
On dark and stone-cropped steep,
The bitter wind made thin
The shepherd's coat, mocked his dim
And feeble fire,
Until a Star splintered the night
Forever, turning shepherd's fright
To wonder and to eager quest.

No incense yet
But acrid smell
Of crowding cattle.
No gold
But tarnished, musty straw.
Hunger-roughened manger planks
Half bar the cold Judean wind
As with tender fumbling
A weary mother wraps her child
And whispers,
"He shall be called Jesus."

Naida Knatvold